

**NEWPORT BEACH PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Council Chambers – 3300 Newport Boulevard**  
**Thursday, January 19, 2012**  
**STUDY SESSION MEETING**  
**4:30 p.m.**

Commissioner Ameri led the assembly in the pledge of allegiance.

**A. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Ameri, Hillgren, Kramer, Myers, Toerge, and Tucker

Staff Present: Patrick Alford, Planning Manager; Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director; Leonie Mulvihill, Assistant City Attorney; and Tony Brine, City Traffic Engineer

Chair Toerge welcomed new Commissioner Larry Tucker and presented a brief background of his experience and qualifications.

Chair Toerge reported this is a study session, introduced the item and noted there will multiple hearings on this issue. He instructed the public to speak on the specific issues being considered and commented on the general format of the meeting.

**B. CURRENT BUSINESS**

**ITEM NO. 1 Newport Banning Ranch: Discussion of Subdivision Design and Circulation**

The Chair read title to the aforementioned item and called for a report from staff.

Patrick Alford, Planning Manager for the Community Development Planning Division reported that this is the first of several study sessions on the project and that this session will focus on the subdivision design and circulation aspects of the project. He listed planned subsequent study sessions and the corresponding subjects.

Mr. Alford reported that the General Plan specifies the site as Open Space/Residential Village, noting the primary use specified is open space. He addressed applicable policies and addressed implementation of the primary land use and actions taken to date relative to the site. He referenced past appraisal of the property, Measure M mitigation funding, exploring open space options, continuing funding opportunities and exploring ways of attaining the property as open space. He addressed alternative uses; including allowing mixed residential and commercial uses. He noted the policies and the potential development lay out of the site.

Mr. Alford addressed the all of the specific aspects for the project and presented the Master Plan of Streets and Highways from the Circulation Element of the General Plan, showing the proposed street systems proposed across the property. He presented the proposed Master Roadway Plan for the project as well. He highlighted the omission of the second connection to Coast Highway in the Master Roadway Plan, which is the subject of the General Plan Amendment. He noted the applicant will need to amend the Master Plan of Arterial Highways through the Orange County Transportation Authority. Mr. Alford addressed the roadway segments, two-lane segments, local streets and private allies.

Mr. Alford reported on the traffic calming features of the Master Development Plan including mid-block tapers, chokes and modified knuckles, all of which are subject to the approval of the City's Traffic Engineer. He presented off-site improvements, some of which would involve the acquisition of additional property and the cooperation of the owner of the "Road & Track" property and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District. Mr. Alford presented details of the subdivision design noting the two (2) applicable documents, the Tentative Tract Map and the Master Development Plan. He addressed the proposed lot configurations, which include conventional single-family, zero lot line, Z-lot, cluster single-family, and multi-family. He reported additional information will be provided at later study sessions.

He presented the configuration for the Resort Colony, parks, Central Community Park, and a pedestrian bridge across Coast Highway to the West Newport Park. He reported a number of public easements proposed, noted all

streets discussed so far will be public streets and the Bluff Top Parks will be maintained by Homeowner Associations, but available to the public.

Mr. Alford addressed other areas with public access, Master Plan of Trails and Coastal Access Plan, infrastructure, Waste Water Master Plan, and drainage plan.

Discussion followed regarding location of Parcel No 189, Bluff Top Park at North Family Village, locations of North and South Community Parks, areas designated for cluster-single-family-attached, review of designs against the Master Development Plan and the Planned Community Development Plan text, location of the Resort Colony and the Urban Colony areas.

Staff noted that the applicant will provide a presentation and many of the Commissioners' questions may be answered at that time.

Mr. Alford noted that the commercial portion is intended as a mixed-use development primarily to serve the residents. Additional details will be provided upon review of the land use segment at a later study session.

Ensuing discussion pertained to the process upon approval of the Tentative Map, applicable review by the Coastal Commission and other steps necessary beyond approval of the Planning Commission relative to single-family residences.

Discussion continued regarding consideration of the second roadway that is supposed to connect with Coast Highway and impacts to the overall circulation.

Mr. Alford addressed the segment of roadway that the applicant is proposing to delete and reported that there would be significant impacts to habitat and land forms and is probably not feasible. He added that it is not needed to serve the project, as staff has studied the impacts of removing that segment and there are no significant related impacts.

The Chair invited the applicant to address the Commission.

Marice White on behalf of Newport Banning Ranch provided information on the design elements and features. She provided a historical background of the site, addressed community outreach and refinement of the plan. Ms. White introduced and deferred to Les Card with LSA Associates for brief comments on circulation.

Mr. Card presented an illustration showing the overall circulation of the project, elimination of the specific roadway segment, the intent of the City's General Plan, as well as the OCTA Master Plan of Arterial Highways. He addressed all modes of transportation are accounted for and addressed the two-lane versus four-lane roadways and sidewalks. Mr. Card addressed traffic calming measures in order to control speed.

Ensuing discussion pertained to the designed speed for the Bluff Road.

Paul Edwards, representing FORMA, presented an overview of the design concepts of the villages and colonies incorporated into the project. He emphasized compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods and addressed setbacks from buffers and natural areas. In addition, he reported the villages and colonies are surrounded by Bluff Park, addressed walk-ability between villages and colonies and providing for a range of lifestyles. He addressed dark-sky lighting, sustainable designs, being consistent with a green-recognized sustainability program. In addition, he addressed the commercial areas related to the boutique resort.

Discussion followed regarding resort units and their operation. Mr. Edwards addressed both North and South Family Villages, frontages and noted that the commercial is integrated into the design of the buildings in a mixed-use form.

Ensuing discussion pertained to the possibility of all residential and no commercial rather than a mixed-use.

John Olivier with Fuscoe addressed water quality and stated the overall goal, improving conditions for the salt water marsh and sediment control.

Commissioner Ameri addressed four (4) major treatments to control water quality and inquired as to which will be used.

Mr. Olivier reported that the information is included in the Water Assessment Report, which includes an entire section on water quality. He noted that there is a hierarchy of treatments, but that unfortunately infiltration on the bluff is not advisable and that the major form to be used will be bio-retention.

Chair Toerge explained the format for public comments and invited those wishing to address the Commission on this item to do so.

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Steve Ray, Executive Director of the Banning Ranch Conservancy, commented on the importance of obtaining information regarding impacts and issues regarding the project, namely, little time allowed for discussion of impacts. He opined that the entire project will have a lot of impacts to sensitive habitats, neighborhoods and land form alteration. He asked regarding the possibility of having the ability to present, at future study sessions, the negative impacts of the project. He referenced one study session scheduled to study the EIR and opined that is not sufficient time since it is an extensive document. He suggested considering having several sessions to consider the project EIR. He offered to share information and cooperate with staff and the Commission.

Sheila Pfafflin, a resident of Costa Mesa, spoke in opposition to the entire project feeling that it is an unnecessary and unwise use of the land. She addressed the placement of a traffic signal at Coast Highway was unjustified, she also stated opposition to the connection of 17th and 19th Streets and opined that the City of Newport Beach should coordinate with the City of Costa Mesa on this matter.

Bruce Bartram, a resident of Newport Beach, spoke in opposition to the project especially the connection of 17th and 19th Streets. He addressed regulatory and permit power of the Coastal Commission regarding the project. He indicated that the Coastal Commission found that the proposed four-lane road would have significant environmental impacts to the environmental habitat of the area.

Debbie Koken, a resident of Costa Mesa, spoke in opposition to the project and felt the circulation plan would be harmful to the environmental habitat and needs to be revised in order to be acceptable.

Kim Farthing, resident of Costa Mesa, spoke in opposition to the development and inquired as to how the City can spend so much time and money on a project that has not been approved by the Coastal Commission. She expressed concerns regarding additional traffic and environmental impacts.

Dorothy Krause, a resident of Newport Beach, presented comments prepared by the City-appointed Environmental Affairs Committee in response to the Newport Banning Ranch EIR, including the number of planned residential units, obscuring ocean views, visual impacts by high buildings, increased traffic on Bluff Road, setbacks from Bluff Road, and increased noise levels.

Ron Frankiewicz, a resident of Costa Mesa, spoke in opposition to the project and felt the area should be saved as open space for future generations and addressed impacts by increased traffic.

Mark Tabbert, a resident of Newport Beach, spoke in opposition to the project and agreed with Mr. Steve Ray's comments.

Jim Mansfield, resident of Costa Mesa, re-iterated comments by the Coastal Commission regarding the project and the circulation plan. He referenced a Master Coastal Development permit that the City hoped to get from the Coastal Commission and noted that there is no process to give the City such a permit.

Suzanne Forst, a resident of Newport Beach, commended the Commission for starting the study with circulation noting that the traffic impacts are profound and will affect at least three cities and three freeways. She agreed with the need for additional time to review and consider the project's EIR. She addressed omissions in the EIR including human health impacts.

Terry Welsh, President of the Banning Ranch Conservancy, addressed the Commission regarding vernal pools and their relationship to the circulation plan for this project. He reported there are 54 vernal pools on the Banning Ranch Mesa and addressed the fairy shrimp as an endangered species. He referenced a DVD of the area. He suggested a smaller development that does not involve development on the vernal pool areas and that is consistent with the Coastal Act.

The Chair thanked the public for their comments and noted future study sessions and public hearing will be held on this project.

**D. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

DRAFT